

SURBER. FOX SQUIRREL



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GIFT OF

Outram Bangs

March 24, 1909.

a nice pair of horns we followed it; saw the body, but not the head. As we were certain from the size of the track that it was a buck we shot, and got an immense doe. We had now killed all the deer and caribou that the law of Maine allows, and all we could now legally get was a moose.

The next to the last morning before leaving the woods the snow was crusty and gave us poor hope, but we soon discovered tracks, following them we saw where a moose had broken branches with his horns. As it was impossible to step without making a noise, owing to the crisp snow, we returned to the camp to wait until the weather moderated. At eleven o'clock we followed out our trail back to where we had left his tracks. Slowly but surely we drew nearer, but he was leading us toward a swamp thicket. Hark! a twig broke not far ahead. The rifle of the guide was covering something. He had his orders, "I must have the first shot, but do not let that moose get away." I could see nothing, hear nothing but my beating heart, but kept my eye on the point covered by the guide's rifle. Were the trees moving? No, it was the antlers of a monster moose and I could see the brown spot at the top of his forehead. Taking quick aim I fired. As the rifle spoke it was echoed by that of the guide. One shot through the brain and one near the heart, the noble beast dropped dead in his tracks less than one hundred feet from where we stood. He had heard or seen us and turned to see his danger, but too late. We took the head to camp, and returned the next morning to get the hide and one hind quarter, and carried them to the nearest point, where a sled from the Oxbow met us and we were soon on our way from cold and snow back to dear old Wilkes-Barre with sunshine and comfort. Now as I sit in my little private den in an easy armchair, my slippered feet resting near the skin mat of old "Swift," now long gone, and leaning back with eyes fixed on many trophies of the chase, I can in fancy see through the curling smoke all the stormy times, the excitement of each particular hunt, and each dear friend who was with us. Many now are gone to the "happy hunting grounds," but on this eve they all come back in memory to live and tell the same old stories over and over.

WILKES-BARRE, PA.

RUFFED GROUSE SHOOTING.

BY FRED SAXE.

When the Summer, with its intense heat, has passed, and the first frost of Fall has changed the foliage to many golden hues; when the warblers, orioles and other insectivorous birds have migrated to their Winter homes, then enters, with its cool, invigorating air, the month of October.

As the open season for grouse shooting commences this month, two friends and myself left here on the morning of the last day in September with the intention of enjoying a few days of that sport in Monroe County. We arrived at our destination by six o'clock, and after eating supper retired early, as we were tired after our long walk from the railroad station to the boarding-house.

When we arose next morning most unpropitious weather greeted us. We could see by the wet ground and the dark clouds that hovered overhead that it had been raining heavily, and from appearances it might rain again before long. Regardless of these indications we set out, accompanied by guide and dog, to roam the pathless woods in search of the gregarious grouse, but in less than an hour we were soaked with water up to our hips from tramping through the wet brush. Towards noon a strong wind arose and the clouds passed away. We had been traversing a ridge, but with so little success that we were debating the advisability of trying new grounds. Just then we heard the report of the young lawyer's gun, and knew he must have bagged a bird.

As he came up to us the guide called: "Look out; 'Tell' is trailing. We will soon see some birds." As he spoke four birds arose. I shot at them, but missed. We followed them up, and the dog soon pointed, when the guide scored one. The dog found another not ten yards away, and that I killed. We hunted there awhile, but did not raise any more, so we left for a large swamp lying about two miles distant in a northerly distant.

While strolling through the picturesque woodlands and enjoying the bracing air, we came upon an old underground house or cave, now in ruins, which we stopped to examine. Our guide told us that this house had been for several years inhabited—some twenty years ago—by a family by the name of Parks, consisting of a man and his two children, son and daughter. The father could carry on a slight conversation, but the children could not talk. They wore no clothing, and with their unkempt hair and tough brown skins, they presented a most uncouth appearance, and were generally known as the wild people of Monroe County.

Shortly afterwards we reached the large swamp, and it was not long before "Tell" had pointed a brace of woodcock. As these fell to our guns, we heard the report of two guns in the forest. We found plenty of birds, but as the foliage was rather thick it was impossible for us to see them when twenty or thirty feet away, so we had to risk snap shots when we heard the buzz.

Late in the afternoon one of the party who had strayed away from the others, while sitting on a fallen tree enjoying a rest, and contemplating nature, was suddenly startled by hearing shouts of: "Help, help! Lost, lost!" His first thought was that the wild people of Monroe were haunting the place, but he quickly responded to the cry, and upon investigating found that it was only a young man who had been out gunning and had wandered into the thicket and had become so bewildered that he did not know which way to turn. He soon recovered from his panic when in our company, and after the proper direction to reach his home had been given him, left us, having thanked us and expressed his determination never to get in such a fix again. It was evening when we returned to our boarding-house, hungry and tired.

We spent one more day hunting grouse, but, although the day was fair and we had pretty good luck, the day was not so full of incident as our first day afield. We bagged six woodcocks and a couple of grouse and occasionally dropped a squirrel as they scampered among the trees while collecting their Winter stores.

That night we left for the city, and when at the station we found we had six grouse, nine woodcock, six gray and one black squirrel to take home with us. We arrived safely, much benefited by our outing and feeling ready to start again on the ordinary rounds of business life.

WEST PITTSBURGH, PA.

GAME birds are reported very scarce in certain sections of Maine. There will, however, be a perfect glut of deer meat in Maine markets, and it is stated that it will be cheaper than beef.

BEARS are reported very numerous in the vicinity of Bingham, Me.

W. S. EMERY, of Eustis, Me., states that during the present deer-hunting season he will have a buck for all who come to his camp. That is, provided they shoot straight. Deer are so plentiful that everyone will have a good opportunity to get his share.

DR. HEBER BISHOP, of Boston, Mass., states that there are plenty of moose in the lower provinces of Canada, but that sportsmen going there this season will be at a great disadvantage owing to their being unable to secure the service of competent guides. All the good guides are already engaged by their former patrons.

THE NORTHERN FOX SQUIRREL.

BY THAD. SURBER.

The Northern fox squirrel (*Sciurus ludovicianus vicinus Bangs*), like others of our small mammals, is fast being exterminated, and I venture to say that in the course of a few years will be wholly extirpated. At one time this fine squirrel ranged from northern Virginia north to central New York and Southern New England, and west through Pennsylvania and a part, if not nearly all of West Virginia, but it is now restricted to a few localities in Pennsylvania, Virginia and the Alleghenies of West Virginia.

In a paper recently published, Outram Bangs thus describes this handsome and interesting subspecies:

"Size somewhat larger than *S. ludovicianus typicus* (Western fox squirrel). Ears never white; nose sometimes white; usual color of upper parts a mixed black and rusty, the hairs banded with black and pale ferruginous; under parts pale ferruginous to rusty white; under surface of tail ferruginous, the hairs with often a subapical bend. Ears ferruginous, and in Winter well tufted. Some specimens are much lighter in color, being yellowish gray above, with the black bandings of the hairs reduced to a minimum; the belly white, and the under surface of the tail pale ferruginous. Some others have a good deal of black on the head, belly and legs, but I have never seen a wholly black individual." (Squirrels of Eastern N. A. Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., pp. 150-1).

Five specimens taken in this vicinity during September, 1897, give the following average measurements: Length (end of nose to end of tail vertebræ), 577.6; Tail (vertebræ), 274; hind foot, 77 millimeters. The largest specimen, a fine old male, measures: Length, 600; tail, 302; hind foot, 75 millimeters.

I have handled a few of these squirrels in the past few years, and have secured a few nice ones this year, but, what is far better, I have been enabled to learn something of its habits by actual observation.

However, I have not yet been able to learn the number of young produced at a litter by this species, but they must breed very slowly, otherwise we might expect them to be more plentiful. Two adult females collected by me during this Fall have each had eight well-developed mammae.

In this part of their range, at least, they are found inhabiting the large groves of oak, chestnut and hickory, where there are very large trees and no undergrowth, and they seem to prefer the edges of such bodies of timber. They are very wild, and as difficult to hunt as the deer or wild turkey, and even when found are about as tenacious of life as either of these two. Quite recently I found a grove frequented by a few of these wily fellows, and spent some time trying to learn something of their habits and secure a few good specimens.

A cornfield stood within about two hundred yards of this grove, and I began by watching it; the first evening and following morning without success; but the following afternoon about two o'clock I saw a fine old fellow make his appearance headed for the corn, and I was here shown how they progress when on the ground, as I had a plain open view of his progress for fully a hundred yards. In moving he stepped along very much like a skunk, though a little more rapidly, with his tail slightly bent and at an angle of about thirty degrees, stopping every ten or fifteen feet to look and listen and then moving on again, but with no variation in his manner of walking. On reaching the rail fence surrounding the cornfield, he did not, as the gray squirrels always do, jump up on a rail and stop, but crawled through an opening between the two lower rails and quickly disappeared in the corn. Afterwards I went to the place where it went through the fence, and found a well-worn runway with a

good many corn shucks scattered near, which led me to believe that this was a regular passway for it to and from the field. This is not the only fox squirrel that I have seen moving around on the ground in feeding, but I yet have to see one that moves along in the jerky, jumping manner of the gray squirrel.

Later this same afternoon I saw another fox squirrel building its nest. When I first saw it it was so far away in the top of an immense white oak that I took it for a gray squirrel, but, noticing how peculiarly it acted, and, the sun striking all at once on the under side of its tail, I saw at once that it was what I was after. By crawling cautiously and keeping well out of its sight, I was at last able to get within about eighty yards of it. It was working very industriously, running out along the larger limbs and breaking or gnawing off a leafy branch; but very seldom securing a single leaf; and then rapidly returning to where it was building in the upright forks of a large



The Northern Fox Squirrel. A gray squirrel, two Northern fox squirrels and a ground squirrel.

limb about eighty feet from the ground. After placing the leafy twig on the pile it had already built, it would lie down, but was up again quickly and away after more, but I noticed particularly that, though it was fully as active as the gray squirrel on the large branches, it kept to them in preference to the smaller ones. This was further shown the next morning as I stood watching one of this species cutting hickory nuts. He didn't jump out on the small, slender branches containing the nuts with the reckless rapidity of his smaller kin, but went cautiously, grasping two or more twigs at a time and holding with feet as well as hands. However, they are quite as quick and active as their smaller brethren on the larger, firmer branches. In cutting the hickory nuts they are held as in all the squirrels, but it is perfectly astonishing with what rapidity they cut off chunks of the shell covering the nut, till it simply rains pieces of nuts on the leaves and earth below. In doing this they work almost as rapidly again as the smaller squirrels.

I have never yet heard one of these squirrels make

any sound louder than a growl, but I have been told by an old negro who has hunted them a great deal in years past that he has often heard them barking like the grays. I was riding along one day and came up with an old fox squirrel sitting on the rail fence by the side of the road. He didn't seem the least bit frightened, but sat still and gave a low growl, and this growling he kept up till I threw a stick at him, when he ran along the fence a short way and up a tree about ten feet, where he perched on a limb, and I then rode on and left it there, still growling and making a low chattering noise, seemingly with its teeth.

The illustration presented herewith shows two Northern fox squirrels, with the skin of a gray and ground squirrel to show comparative sizes. Largest fox squirrel is 780 millimeters (30.75 inches), total length from tip to tip.

I will now close this with a request to my friends of the sporting fraternity, that, if any of you happen to shoot specimens of this species, by all means preserve it, and by sending it to some museum in which you take an interest, or to the United States National Museum, earn the gratitude of future generations, when the Northern fox squirrel, like the elk that at one time (not so many years ago, either,) ranged the Allegheny Mountains, will be forever swept off the face of the earth.

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, VA.

DO ANTELOPES SHED THEIR HORNS?

In the September issue of the *SPORTSMAN* Thad Surber makes the statement that prong-horn antelope *do* shed their horns annually. Now I believe Mr. Surber is mistaken on this point, as, in a ten years' acquaintance with the antelope, I never saw a shed horn, neither have I ever seen an immature horn on a full-grown animal.

Besides, I think that the construction of the horn is such as to preclude the possibility of shedding. If I am mistaken in this, however, I would like to have Mr. Surber or some of his learned authority explain in what manner the pith of the horn is protected until a new horn is grown.

J. C. REILLY.

BARTLETT, NEB.

PROVISIONS FOR CAMPING OUT.

If I were starting out with one other to make a two-weeks' hunting trip, says a writer in *Harper's Round Table*, my outfit of provisions would consist of the following: 30 pounds of flour, 5 pounds of sugar, 5 pounds of coffee (ground and roasted), 2 pounds of tea, 2 pounds of salt, 3 pounds of prunes (dried) or apples, 20 pounds of bacon, 2 pounds of baking powder, 8 pounds of beans, 8 pounds of rice, 3 pounds of tobacco, 2 pounds of powdered alum for curing skins, and if I were taking any dried vegetables, about 2 pounds.

Of course, if you are traveling by wagon so much care is not needful for the protection of your provisions, although it is always desirable to have them well put up and occupying as little space as possible. But if you are going in a canoe or are packing, then everything must be carefully and stoutly done up, both for protection from rain as from frequent handling. Everything should be in heavy canvas sacks, and if in the rainy season, you ought to carry along a plentiful supply of rubber blankets, certainly one for each pack animal. If in a wagon or canoe, rubber sheets, though not so many, are quite as necessary. The sugar, baking powder, salt, tobacco and alum should be in tin boxes, and the small packages put into sack to avoid having so many little bundles to handle. You should also have little bags for your salt, sugar, tea and coffee for daily consumption,

that you need not go to the main supply more than once in every four, five or six days. This you would find of very great convenience if you are camping every night, because you need unpack only the bags you are daily using, and can leave the main supply of provisions undisturbed.

THE sleeping-bags which the Milford Shoe Co., of Milford, Mass., are making for the Alaska trade are about seven feet in length by about three feet in width, tapering at the bottom. There is a flap that closes over the top which makes the bag wind and snow proof.

The sleeping-bag, so called, really consists of three bags, *i. e.*, the outer being made from heavy duck, which is waterproof, by the paraffin process. The next bag inside of this is made from heavy sheep pelt or shearlings, as they are termed. It is the hide with wool on. Inside of this is the inner bag or sheet, which is made from a heavy drill. The bag is large enough for a man to crawl inside and sleep at full length.

The bags are arranged with loops around the edges for rope to be strung through, so that they can be hung upon trees at night, like a hammock. Also are arranged so they may be rolled up and carried on the back when not in use.

In addition to the sleeping-bags, this firm are making Esquimaux suits from sheep pelt, as well as other warm garments suitable for Klondike emigrants and sportsmen.

THE annual meeting of the Rosedale Gun Club, of Toronto, Canada, was held at the Granite Club, October 1st, when the appointment of officers for the ensuing season took place, resulting in the unanimous re-election of the following gentlemen:

H. M. Pellatt, president; D. S. Barclay, vice-president; D. L. Van Vlack, captain; A. R. Stell, secretary.

Mr. J. B. Miller having resigned the position of treasurer, Mr. W. H. Gooderham was elected to fill that office.

The meeting was very largely attended, all members present feeling that in the establishment of the Rosedale Gun Club an opportunity is at last afforded gentlemen who are admirers of this class of sport and who are opposed to shooting for cash prizes, sweepstakes and other unsportsmanlike methods, for enjoying a Saturday afternoon's recreation in a sociable and agreeable manner.

The ensuing season is looked forward to with pleasant anticipation by the members, the captain having arranged for a number of friendly matches with outside clubs in Canada and the United States. There will also be club handicap matches for gold medals, three medals to be presented to each class.

The new Magautrap for artificial bird shooting, which the club has just purchased, is the only one of the kind in Canada, and serves to indicate that the equipment of the club will at all times be of the most modern style obtainable. This trap performs the work of five ordinary artificial traps, throwing, as it does, singles, doubles and, in fact, the whole flock of birds in the air at a time if desired. The machine is worked by one man, the birds being released by the touch of an electric button.

WILLIAM READ & SONS, 107 Washington street, Boston, Mass., sell all the prominent English and American makes of guns, but make a specialty of the Scott. This gun took nine of the principal prizes at the Monte Carlo 1897 meeting for the International pigeon shooting. A catalogue and list of second-hand guns will be sent to any reader of this paper upon application. A beautifully illustrated art catalogue of fishing tackle is also issued by this firm.

FORTY-FIRST ANNUAL HUNT OF THE ARMSTEAD DEER HUNTING CLUB OF VIRGINIA.

BY THE SECRETARY.

The club assembled, as usual, in Staunton, Va. After providing the necessary commissary supplies, horses and vehicles for a week's sojourn, we moved out by way of

The full penalty for this, however, was promptly and forcibly exacted on return to camp, to wit: a permanent deprivation of a large portion of the rear pendant of the nether garment, and this nailed in a conspicuous place on the house front among the hides and heads of deer as a future preventive against the contagion.

The convalescent buck fever victim at the window in the picture, just after paying the penalty, is from Richmond, Va., but on condition that he will not be taken with a relapse on the next hunt his name is mercifully withheld.

While another picture shows only the saddles of five deer (the other portion having been devoured by the hungry hunters) and two undressed deer, yet the truth is that only three of these deer were killed by our camp. Unfortunately a party of deer hunters was encamped over the divide, and not knowing we were in camp extended their standers into our hunting ground. The result was that they and not we killed all except three deer; but it was all satisfactorily explained and amicably adjusted, save in the instance of a certain Richmond lawyer from our camp who found his stand occupied by the aforesaid hunters. They met alone in the mountains, and the question of right of possession was immediately raised. Judging from the reports of the lawyer at camp that night they must have had a lively debate. The lawyer, positively declining to be made defendant in the

case by the would-be plaintiff, gained his point and held the stand by the authority of the high code of "bluff."

The two unbutchered deer in the picture are trophies



Forty-first Annual Hunt of the Armstead Deer Hunting Club of Virginia. Cavalcade en route to camp.

the Jennings Gap road for our camp, twenty-two miles west.

We arrived in camp time enough to feed and comfortably house twenty men, thirty six horses and twenty-two hounds before dark. The following club members answered roll call:

Peyton S. Coles, Albemarle County, Va., president; C. L. Fowler, Charlottesville, Va., first vice-president; F. B. Moran, Charlottesville, Va., second vice-president; J. Thompson Brown, Richmond, Va., secretary and treasurer; F. W. Robertson, Charlottesville, Va., commissary; Edward Coles, Albemarle County, Va.; Hon. James Lyon, Richmond, Va.; George W. Goodyear, Charlottesville, Va.; F. T. Lerch, Baltimore, Md.

These reported their invited guests as follows:

F. P. Farish, Charlottesville, Va.; Hon. Harry St. George Tucker, Staunton, Va.; Rev. Dr. Walter Q. Hulihan, Staunton, Va.; John Scotts, Scottsville, Va.; W. T. Hancock, Richmond, Va.; Edward Scott, Richmond, Va.; William Durrett, W. W. Waddell, Morris Watson, John Uppleby and C. H. Limberick, Charlottesville, Va.; M. R. Coalter, West Augusta, Va.; John Montgomery, Deerfield, Va.

The first day in camp was spent in a general fixing up and in planning hunts, testing guns, preparing ammunition, etc. Here is a class of new hunters being instructed by old ones how, what and when to shoot, which instruction acts as a kind of antidote for the "buck fever," and at the same time determines the best shot among them.

A dummy deer is used as a target; but although this and every other precaution is taken to prevent the new hunters from catching the "buck fever," there is never a hunt without the loss of game on account of this epidemic among the "tenderfeet" with us. Several on this hunt had it to the extent of allowing deer to come within twenty paces of them without being dropped.



Forty-first Annual Hunt of the Armstead Deer Hunting Club of Virginia. Trying the guns and gunners on a dummy deer.

of a new member of the club, who on account of deafness was thought to be wholly incapacitated for the pleasures of the hunt, and unable to detect or secure the stealthy and sagacious deer. In fact, it was considered inadvisable to take him in the mountains among the bear and other ferocious animals, as his deafness might prevent him from properly protecting himself, or, at least, from detecting and securing game. For these reasons

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